

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
FLORENCE DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION  
OF THE UNITED STATES FOR A  
SEARCH WARRANT FOR SAIA LTL  
FREIGHT WOODEN SHIPMENT CRATE  
WITH SAIA PRO NUMBER 770484121703  
LOCATED IN FLORENCE, SOUTH  
CAROLINA

MISC. No. 4:23cr 336

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF**  
**AN APPLICATION FOR A SEARCH WARRANT**

I, Christopher A. Michocki, a Special Agent with Homeland Security Investigations, being duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

**INTRODUCTION**

1. I have been employed as a Special Agent (SA) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), since October of 2006, and am currently assigned to HSI Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) in Charleston, South Carolina. While employed by HSI, I have investigated or participated in numerous investigations of federal criminal violations including unlawful possession, importation, possession with intent to distribute, and distribution of controlled substances, and the associated conspiracies. Moreover, I am a federal law enforcement officer who is engaged in enforcing the criminal laws, including 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and 846, and I am authorized by law to request a search warrant.

2. This Affidavit is submitted in support of an application for a search warrant for the item (hereinafter referred to as wooden crate) specifically described in **Attachment A** of this Affidavit, and the contents of the wooden crate therein for contraband and evidence, fruits, and

instrumentalities of violations of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and 846, which items are more specifically described in **Attachment B** of this Affidavit.

3. The statements in this Affidavit are based in part on information provided by other law enforcement officers and on my investigation of this matter. Since this Affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing a search warrant, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause to believe that contraband and evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and 846 are presently located within the wooden crate specifically described in **Attachment A** of this Affidavit.

#### **PROBABLE CAUSE**

4. On March 20, 2023, HSI Charleston received an investigative referral from HSI Indianapolis in reference to a shipment of suspected Cocaine. HSI Indianapolis Special Agent (SA) Jonathan Goehring, advised that on March 20, 2023, his office conducted a seizure of a shipment of approximately (82) kilograms of Cocaine. The shipment was concealed inside a large wooden crate.

5. The shipment was delivered by Saia LTL Freight, an American freight shipping company headquartered in Johns Creek, GA. According to SA Goehring, the same shipper had shipped a similar shipment to Saia LTL Freight located at 2972 Republic Avenue, Florence, SC, and the shipment is currently located at the Saia LTL Freight warehouse at 2972 Republic Avenue.

6. SA Goehring provided a copy of the shipping label associated with the shipment described in paragraph (5) of this Affidavit. The contents of the shipping label are listed in part herein.

Saia Pro Number: 770484121703

Shipper: Estrada Industries, 4301 W. Mohave Street, Phoenix AZ 85043

Consignee: Copper CNC Inc., 2972 Republic Ave., Florence, SC 29501

Items: (1) CR, Injection Molding, Weight 450 lbs.

7. On March 20, 2023, I contacted HSI Task Force Officer (TFO) Brandon Braxton who is employed by Florence County Sheriff's Office (FCSO). I requested TFO Braxton to attempt to locate the shipment at Saia LTL Freight. Management at Saia LTL Freight were aware of the shipment and agreed to allow law enforcement on the premises. TFO Braxton located a wooden crate matching the description provided by HSI Indianapolis. The wooden crate has a shipping label bearing the number 770484121703, as described in paragraph (6) of this Affidavit.

8. On the same date, FCSO Corporal Tommy Rauch utilized departmental K9 "Dukat" and conducted an open-air inspection inside the warehouse that resulted in a positive alert for the odor of narcotics in the wooden crate described in this Affidavit.

9. From March 20, 2023, to March 21, 2023, FCSO conducted surveillance of the Saia LTL Freight warehouse to identify any individuals attempting to pick up the shipment. No attempts were made to pick the shipment up. Furthermore, according to Saia LTL Freight management, the shipment arrived on March 18, 2023, and no inquiries as to the shipment were made. HSI Charleston intends to seize the wooden crate.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the foregoing, there is probable cause to believe that the federal criminal statutes cited herein have been violated, and that the contraband, property, evidence, fruits and instrumentalities of these offenses, more fully described in **Attachment B**, are located in the wooden crate described in **Attachment A**. I respectfully request that this Court issue a search

warrant for the wooden crate described in **Attachment A**, authorizing the seizure and search of the items described in **Attachment B**.

Assistant United States Attorney Lauren Hummel has reviewed this Affidavit.



Christopher A. Michocki  
Special Agent  
Homeland Security Investigations

SUBSCRIBED and SWORN to before me  
this 21 day of March, 2023.



THE HONORABLE KAYMANI D. WEST  
United States Magistrate Judge